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SUBJECT: CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED IN
PREPARATION FOR WORLD CUP 2010

SUMMARY

[11](#). (U) On December 8-9, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (NMCF), in cooperation with the Department of Social Development (DSD) and numerous civil society organizations, launched the Champions for Children Campaign to ensure the protection and safety of children during the FIFA World Cup 2010 and beyond. Both the government and its NGO partners have already identified the potential risks to children during such a large scale event and have developed plans for their protection. Lawyers from the South African Law Reform Commission (SALRC) expect passage of the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) bill early in 2010. Of paramount concern is the closure of public schools for the duration of the World Cup, but stakeholders are already mobilizing to supervise, protect and feed children during the extended school break. Post will look for ways to support these efforts to protect South Africa's most vulnerable citizens. End summary.

GOVERNMENT'S ACTION PLAN

[12](#). (U) Before the conference began, the senior and principal State Law Advisers for the SALRC told Poloff that the TIP Bill will be voted on in Parliament as early as late February. Principal State Law Adviser Dellene Clark said there is now plenty of political will to pass the bill. She added that the extensive consultation process undertaken during the drafting of the legislation meant that implementation of the bill should also be quick and virtually hassle-free.

[13](#). (U) Ms. Gyan Dwarika, Social Work Advanced Specialist for the DSD, outlined the department's comprehensive Child Protection Action Plan for the FIFA World Cup 2010 which was tested as a draft plan during the 2009 FIFA Confederations Cup. The plan calls for Provincial Joint Operation Command Centers (PROVJOC) feeding into one National Joint Operation Command Center (NATJOC). Provincial Command Centers will assemble teams consisting of all stakeholders: non-governmental organizations working with children, child and youth care workers, police, probation services, shelters and safe houses. They will provide the contact information and work schedules of all relevant personnel to the NATJOC as well as the names and contacts of two individuals who will be on standby duty for the duration of the World Cup event.

[14](#). (U) The Action Plan focuses on fostering collaboration between the public, civil society and government. It outlines training and capacity building programs for the relevant stakeholders as well as procedures for communication between the government, civil society and service providers. A national coordinator will make site visits to the provinces to ensure compliance with the plan's reporting and staffing

requirements. The plan also provides for education and mobilization of parents and communities in partnership with existing civil society programs and provincial authorities, although the source of the funding for such initiatives is unclear.

CIVIL SOCIETY'S PREPARATIONS

15. (U) Civil society has also mobilized to counter the special threats to children posed by the influx of tourists expected to attend the World Cup. Molo Songololo, a non-governmental organization that works on the rights, needs and protection of children, conducted an impact study to identify risks and vulnerabilities for children in 2010. The DSD then used Songololo's study when crafting the Child QDSD then used Songololo's study when crafting the Child Protection Action Plan. The NMCF convened this conference to launch their "Champions for Children Campaign: 2010 and Beyond" which seeks to raise community awareness on the risks facing children and create a movement for the protection of children nationally and regionally. Ms. Moipoine Buda-Ramatlo, Programmes Director for the NMCF, described a publicity campaign that will feature South Africans from all walks of life -- from former first lady Graca Machel to a school principal to a township grandmother -- declaring, "I am a champion for children. Are you?" Childline's 24-hour toll-free hot line will be advertised nationally before, during and after the World Cup.

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WHAT WILL THE CHILDREN DO?

16. (U) After the presentations by the DSD and various NGOs, grandmothers and teens from local community organizations participated in small group discussions among the stakeholders, providing "on the ground" context for the planning. The number one concern of all participants was the SAG's agreement to close all public schools for the duration of the FIFA World Cup Tournament in order to cut down on traffic congestion. Participants complained that the SAG had "sold its soul to FIFA" with little thought to the implications of such a decision. Concerns ranged from the safety of unaccompanied children drawn to cities by the excitement of fan parks to implementation and funding of feeding programs for the month that schools are closed (June 11 - July 11).

17. (U) Joan van Niekerk, National Coordinator for Childline, described a national inter-church initiative called The Ultimate Goal (www.theultimategoal.co.za) which aims to address some of these needs. Churches who sign on to the program agree to run programs for the children of their community during the World Cup. FIFA is organizing programs for children such as it's Football for Hope center in Khayelitsha on the outskirts of Cape Town. Coca Cola and MTN will be sponsoring Township TVs, large outdoor screens where soccer matches and other World Cup festivities will be broadcast in low income communities.

HIGH VISIBILITY

18. (U) Poloff was not able to attend the second day of the campaign launch, but it enjoyed wide press coverage due to the involvement of former first lady Machel. Machel characterized the campaign as a "call to ordinary people" to protect and care for the children of their communities and urged South Africans to act if they suspected a child was being harmed "in any way by anyone."

COMMENT

19. (U) South Africa is mounting an "all hands on deck" effort to protect children during the FIFA World Cup 2010. Their plans were test run during the FIFA Confederations Cup in June 2009 and the SAG seems satisfied that the Action Plan is thorough and effective. If the DSD can successfully lobby the national government for increased funding, they will be better able to fully implement the training, capacity building and community mobilization aspects of the plan. Post will look for ways to support the SAG's efforts, especially with respect to providing for children's safety and well-being during the extended school break. End comment.
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